



# NOAA CORPS BULLETIN

Official Information for NOAA Commissioned Officers

Volume 35, Number 4

Fourth Quarter, 2005

## **FROM THE DESK OF THE DIRECTOR**

This past year has been a momentous one for OMAO and the NOAA Corps, as officers and civilians worked side by side to accomplish NOAA's mission in areas as far ranging as launching a new ship to making multiple penetrations into the eyes of some of the most dangerous hurricanes on record.

Overshadowing the critical work you do each day was a record-shattering hurricane season that brought devastation to the Gulf region and required extraordinary efforts on the part of many of you, both before and after the storms hit. NOAA Corps officers were at the forefront of many of NOAA's hurricane response activities and helped the agency shine in the national eye during these dark days.

Yet as important as these activities were—and as unusual the circumstances under which they were conducted—we must not lose sight of the usual work we do, because it is what helps fuel NOAA each day. The ships we operate and manage enable NOAA to serve the nation with accurate nautical charts, add to the world's body of knowledge of atmospheric and ocean processes, protect our fragile coastal resources, and manage the fisheries that support livelihoods and provide sustenance. Our aircraft help water resource managers make practical decisions, document changes in the coastline, map topography through remote sensing, enable scientists to identify and protect marine mammals at sea, and provide meteorological data for severe storms and atmospheric studies, just to name a few. And, of course, you all helped tie it together by bringing your operational expertise and leadership skills to program and staff offices.

The NOAA Corps has much to be proud of as a Service, and how you've conducted yourselves this year has once again underscored that fact.

Aside from post-hurricane response activities, which were highlighted in the last NOAA Corps Bulletin, here are some of our significant accomplishments for 2005:

This was another milestone year for NOAA's fleet modernization. The first new fisheries survey vessel (FSV), OSCAR DYSON, was commissioned and began operations from its home port in Kodiak, Alaska. The second FSV, HENRY B. BIGELOW, was launched the day after construction began on FSV #3. A contract was awarded and conversion is underway of former Navy T-AGOS vessel CAPABLE (to be named OKEANOS EXPLORER), which will be devoted to ocean exploration. The earlier refurbishment of FAIRWEATHER as a multi-capable platform paid off this summer when the ship was diverted from its nautical charting mission to recover a lost tsunami buoy as well as conduct a FOCI (Fisheries-Oceanography Coordinated Investigation) project.

## **IN THIS ISSUE:**

From the Director's Desk..... 1-2  
Unusually Arduous Sea Duty ..... 2

Billet List..... 2,A1

## **FROM THE DESK OF THE DIRECTOR** (continued)

Aviation safety took a big leap forward as well. To address safety concerns about the use of chartered aircraft by NOAA employees, OMAO conducted, with the assistance of all NOAA line and staff offices, an exhaustive review of employee use of non-NOAA aircraft. The review culminated in the development of a new NOAA Administrative Order entitled "NOAA Aviation Safety Policy," which was approved by the NOAA Executive Council on July 1. Full implementation of the order will occur in October 2006, once OMAO establishes several program components set forth in the policy.

During FY 2005, NOAA aircraft logged more than 3,905 flight hours and NOAA ships recorded 3,926 operating days in support of NOAA's programs. OMAO outsourced 3,947 flight hours and 553 operating days at sea to meet additional program needs. Another 1,606 outsourced operating days were accomplished by NOAA using line office program funds. During hurricane season, NOAA's two P-3's flew 73 missions and 480 flight hours, and deployed 880 dropsondes. The Gulfstream IV jet flew 58 missions and 433 flight hours, and deployed 1,286 dropsondes.

The NOAA ship and aircraft fleet modernization plans requested by Congress have been approved by the NOAA Executive Council. Next steps, after approval by the Under Secretary, include submission to the Department of Commerce and Office of Management and Budget for approval before the plans go to Congress.

The Commissioned Personnel Center has made some outstanding improvements to its personnel systems, resulting in greater efficiencies and convenience through technology. Officers can now access their official personnel files through the Web-based Virtual CPC, have easier access to online forms, and can search the newly revised NOAA Corps Directives and policies online. After an extensive review, CPC downsized the billet list to reflect the number of billets now authorized by law. This review has resulted in better management of the limited number of officers, reflects the true needs of NOAA programs, and meets Congress' expectations regarding authorized strength. The Officer Evaluation System was also redesigned, requiring submission of a new Officer Evaluation Report that provides more comprehensive information for career and management decisions. In conjunction with proposed legislation to expand the NOAA Corps that is still working its way to the Hill, CPC is also working on a five-year execution plan that will be implemented once the legislation is approved.

These accomplishments are due to the exceptional leaders we have in OMAO at all levels. Your professionalism, leadership skills, commitment, expertise, and willingness to stretch your limits have been put to the ultimate test, and you have passed with flying colors. I am proud to be your Director, and have confidence that together we will continue to build on our legacy of outstanding service to NOAA and the Nation. Thank you for your hard work, achievements, and compassion. The upcoming year will bring new challenges, and I look forward to meeting them with you and taking this organization to even greater levels of achievement and excellence.

## **UNUSUALLY ARDUOUS SEA DUTY**

The following NOAA vessels meet the criteria as stated in NOAA Corps Regulations, Chapter 2, Section 02103, for being designated as Unusually arduous sea duty for calendar year 2006.

JOHN N. COBB  
RONALD H. BROWN  
OSCAR DYSON  
KA=IMIMOANA

MCARTHUR II  
MILLER FREEMAN  
FAIRWEATHER  
RAINIER

## **BILLET LIST**

Attached to this Bulletin is a current NOAA Corps Billet List. The list has been updated from PCS orders received by CPC through December 31, 2005.

**I. PROMOTIONS**

Mark P. Moran	CDR	11/14/05
Richard T. Brennan	LCDR	11/14/05
Adam D. Dunbar	LCDR	11/14/05
Keith A. Golden	LT	11/14/05
Shawn Maddock	LT	11/14/05
Benjamin S. Sniffen	LTJG	11/14/05
Sarah E. Jackson	LTJG	11/14/05

**II. TEMPORARY APPOINTMENTS**

Van Westendorp, Christiaan H.	ENS	09/30/05
-------------------------------	-----	----------

**III. PERMANENT APPOINTMENTS**

None.

**IV. APPROVED RETIREMENTS**

Philip R. Kennedy	CDR	02/01/06
John C. Clary, III	CAPT	04/01/06
James C. Gardner, Jr.	CAPT	04/01/06

**V. APPROVED RESIGNATIONS/SEPARATIONS**

None.

**VI. RETIREMENTS**

John M. Steger	LCDR	10/01/05
David S. Savage	LCDR	11/01/05
Robert W. Poston	CDR	12/01/05

**VII. RESIGNATIONS/SEPARATIONS**

Timothy D. Salisbury	ENS	10/31/05
Jeffrey R. Judas	LT	11/30/05
Noah Lawrence-Slavas	LT	12/15/05
Melissa M. Ford	ENS	12/16/05
Erik M. Eilers	LT	12/31/05

**VIII. OTHER CHANGES TO THE LINEAL LIST**

None.

**IX. ON BOARD STRENGTH AS OF 31 DECEMBER 2005 – 275**